

The Washington Post

METRO

12/11/71
SATURDAY, DEC



By Charles Del Vecchio—The Washington Post
The FBI building will be the most expensive structure ever built here.

FBI Building Costs Set at \$109 Million

By Abbott Combes
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The construction cost of the FBI's monumental new headquarters at 9th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW is now projected at \$109.6 million. That is nearly \$50 million more than the initial 1962 estimate of \$60 million and a \$7 million increase over an estimate of \$102.6 million made last April.

The latest cost projection is in a report prepared by U.S. Comptroller General Elmer B. Staats for Sen. William W. Proxmire (D-Wis.), who requested the study Sept. 2 and received it Wednesday.

Proxmire gave no indication yesterday that he plans any action. "The letter (containing the Staats report) speaks for itself," he said, declining further comment.

The study attributed the increase to a number of factors in the design of the 11-story

structure, to continual jumps in the construction cost index (a gauge measuring building costs) and to a number of special features in the building that are not normally contained in office complexes.

There was no hint in the report of any intentional price increases to permit larger profits for the builders, such as the allegations that caused a furor over the construction of the Rayburn House Office Building.

In June, the General Services Administration (GSA), the agency responsible for the building's construction, awarded the contract for the superstructure to the Blake Construction Co., 1120 Connecticut Ave. NW, on its low bid of about \$69 million. The Blake company also built the

See FBI, B3, Col. 1

FBI Building Cost Up Sharply

FBI, From BI
Defense Department's Forrestal Office Building.

Stanley Prill, the company's vice president in charge of the FBI project, said yesterday his firm does not expect to overrun the contract.

"I would say our only problem is building a \$70 million building in the time we've got to build it (the target date is May, 1974) and as well as we'd like to build it," he said.

Nothing has occurred to alter the contract, he said, adding that "my supposition is that items outside our contract" have caused the increased costs.

"I've got a contract to build a \$70 million building and if nobody changes anything, that's what we'll build it for," he said. (Blake's contract does not include the building's \$14.3 million substructure, architect fees, or furnishings and special equipment.)

The FBI building was approved by Congress in 1962, with the cost then estimated at \$60 million. A Pennsylvania Avenue site was designated in January, 1963, and a design contract was awarded to the Chicago architectural firm of C. F. Murphy Associates in June of that year. The design was supposed to be completed by December, 1964, and the construction contract awarded in March, 1965.

During this period, the newly established Pennsylvania Avenue Commission was making plans for the avenue's development. Since the FBI building was a major facility in any development scheme, GSA halted design preparations to await the approval of the Pennsylvania Avenue study. In March, 1964, the commission had made suffi-

SPECIAL FEATURES IN THE FBI BUILDING NOT GENERALLY FOUND IN OFFICE BUILDINGS

Description of features	Estimated cost adjusted to April 1971 (thousands)
Filing areas (500,000 square feet) which require an increase in the floor loading factor to 150 pounds per square foot (normally 80)	\$ 368.5
Shops, printing, and paper storage area (300,000 square feet) which require an increase in the floor loading factor to 300 pounds per square foot	300.0
Special laboratory areas (89,000 square feet)	1,192.6
Gymnasium and physical training areas	144.7
Auditorium, amphitheater, classrooms, and library for training	1,279.7
Auto repair facilities for Washington Field Office	375.2
Firing range	1,337.0
Photography laboratory	301.5
Laboratory test pattern range and ballistics testing area	33.5
Special secure communications system	81.7 ^a
Alarm and smoke detection systems	200.0
Waste disposal system for disposal of documents	66.0 ^a
Special secure telephone system	61.0 ^a
Morgue	250.0
Emergency power system	301.5
Pneumatic tube system	396.0
Cryptographic vault	(a) (b)
Automatic data processing areas requiring special rooms with raised floors and increased electrical and mechanical loads	2,500.0
Special vertical circulation requiring escalators for tours of building for general public	435.5
Extra plumbing required by abnormally high population of building	268.0
Conveyor systems for special handling of mail and files	150.0

^aSecurity requirement.

^bEstimated cost not available.

The GAO study listed special features of the FBI building, along with the estimated cost of the items.

cient progress to allow resumption of planning.

According to the GSA, because the FBI building was one of the first projects developed along guidelines established by the Pennsylvania Avenue Commission, it was carefully scrutinized by both the Fine Arts Commission and the National Capital Planning Commission.

Gaining approval from those District planning agencies required a two-year period of "give and take, study and re-study," the GSA said. The two commissions approved the plans in March, 1966, two years behind the original schedule.

Construction of the substructure was then started and a revised prospectus, transferring all the design changes into dollars and cents, was submitted to Congress in April, 1970.

This revision, adding 159,800 square feet to the original plan and drastically changing the structure's basic design to conform with the Pennsylvania Avenue Commission, established a new cost estimate of \$102.6 million. Congress accepted the new design and authorized the increased funding.

In March, 1966, two years behind the original design, the GSA based the need for increased funding "on

the actual and projected increase in the construction cost index from March, 1962, to March, 1971, the estimated date of award of a construction contract for the superstructure."

(Over the last decade, building costs nationally have increased an average of about 10 per cent a year.)

According to the comptroller general's study, the \$109.6 million figure given Proxmire is based on further "escalation factors" supplied by the GSA. These primarily include increased labor and material costs.

Staats also said that he discovered "no evidence that special facilities had been planned for use by FBI executives."

Staats said that the FBI building's construction cost per square foot, about \$34 as of April compare favorably to other construction in the District. For example he noted that the James Forrestal building cost \$29.67 per square foot, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) building \$24.67, the Museum of History and Technology \$64.59 and the New Executive Office Building \$42.30, or an average of \$39 per square foot. A study of the construction costs of eight commercial buildings in the metropolitan area showed their costs to average \$39 per square foot, he added.

The FBI headquarters will be exceeded in square footage only by the Pentagon and the Rayburn building. Its 11 stories will tower over the nearby seven-story Justice Department, which technically controls the FBI. The most expensive structure ever erected in the nation, it is expected to be named after FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.